

On the "Shoreline of Mystery," 1963

—has been repeatedly threatened. According to Mark Lane she was visited a few days after the event by a gun-toting man: "He just told me it'd be best if I didn't say anything because I might get hurt." She said several policemen came to see her after that, and one expressed hope that she would not be killed on the way to work.

We have hardly begun to describe the intimidation to which important witnesses have been subjected. Enough evidence is in to justify an immediate investigation. We want to know *why* people in Dallas seem so intent on keeping the truth about Ruby and Tippit from getting out.

[I: TIPPIT]

THE TIPPIT KILLING WAS NEVER conclusively "solved" by the Warren Commission. The gross faults in its chain of evidence pointing to Oswald as the lone cop-killer have been exposed in several recent books; we won't go into it here. Certainly, the Commission did not adequately investigate Tippit's movements prior to his death, or the curious presence near the scene of off-duty Patrolman Olsen, a close associate of Jack Ruby (see Penn Jones' story on Olsen below).

On Bill Turner's last whirlwind trip to Dallas—acting on a tip from "sleuth" David Lifton—he uncovered five witnesses to Tippit's whereabouts in the last minutes of his life. There is no indication that the Commission or any police agency was even aware of them. Photographer Al Volkland and his wife Lou, both of whom knew Tippit, said that 15 or 20 minutes after the assassination they saw him at a gas station and waved to him. They observed Tippit sitting in his police car at a Gloco gas station in Oak Cliff, watching the cars coming over the Houston Street viaduct from downtown Dallas. Three employees of the Gloco station, Tom Mullins, Emmett Hollingshead and J. B. "Shorfy" Lewis, all of whom knew Tippit, confirmed the Volklands' story. They said Tippit stayed at the station for "about 10 minutes, somewhere between 12:45 and 1:00, then he went tearing off down Lancaster at high speed"—on a bee-line toward Jack Ruby's apartment and in the direction of where he was killed a few minutes later.

What could Tippit have heard or seen to cause him to leave his observation post at the Gloco station and roar up the street? Police radio logs show no instructions to move. We know that cabdriver Whaley said he drove Oswald across the Houston Street viaduct (past the Gloco station at the same time Tippit was reported there) to a spot near the rooming house. Is it possible that Tippit spotted Oswald in the cab,

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recognized him, and for some reason took off to intercept him? If we recall that while Oswald was in the rooming house, Earlene Roberts observed a police car pull up in front and honk the horn, and the police statement that all cars in the area were accounted for—except Tippit's—then it is possible indeed: Earlene, who was blind in one eye and whose sight was failing in the other, said she thought the number on the car was 107; Tippit's car number was 10. Earlene said she saw two policemen in the car; all patrol cars in the area that day were one-man cars and Earlene, with her poor vision, may have mistaken Tippit's uniform jacket, hanging on a coat-hanger in his car, for another cop. The Commission should at least have investigated the possibility.

It is scandalous that three years after the event we should be reduced to this sort of speculation; that Turner, in one quick trip to Dallas, could learn more about Tippit's movements before his death than the combined investigative resources of the police, FBI and Warren Commission.

Even the evidence the Commission did have was scrutinized in the most perfunctory way. Tippit's last known radio transmission, for example, was at 12:54, when he reported his position at Lancaster and 8th. But at 1:08, the approximate time of the shooting according to at least one witness, the dispatcher received two garbled transmissions from a patrol car. The FBI interpreted them as coming from 58 and 488, although no such call numbers are known to have been in service. Dallas police thought they came from 78—Tippit. Yet no one made any attempt to de-garble the transmissions, despite the existence of "voice-printing" techniques capable of reconstructing garbled transmissions phonetically. Provided the tapes have not been destroyed, it is *still* possible to voice-print those transmissions. They may provide a key to the mystery of Tippit's death.

[II: THE OVERLOOKED EVIDENCE]

WE EMBARKED on our limited investigation to get a story, not to solve the case. We are not cops, God knows. But we came across so much overlooked evidence that we can't help but wonder if the Warren Commission was set up to do anything but allay public fears of a conspiracy. Witnesses who supported its Oswald-lone-assassin-and-copkiller theory, like Helen Markham, Howard Brennan and Marina Oswald, were coddled and the discrepancies in their hopelessly confused testimony ignored. Witnesses who told a different story, like Jean Hill and Patrick Dean, were im-

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